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WILHELM MÜLLER AND THE GERMAN VOLKSLIED. I.

The edition of Müller's poems used is: *Gedichte von Wilhelm Müller*, hrsg. v. Max Müller. 2 Thle. Leipzig (Brockhaus) 1868. (In *Bibliothek der deutschen National-literatur des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts.*) This includes:

Die schöne Müllerin (25 poems).

Johannes und Esther (10) including 1 published in *Debora*.

Reiselieder:

I. *Grosse Wanderschaft* (16).

II. *Die Winterreise* (24).

III. *Wanderlieder* (6).

Ländliche Lieder (19), including *Abschiedslied* (*Urania*, 1823), reduced from 10 to 7 stanzas and called *Erlösung*; but omitting *Rückkehr* (*U.* 1823, p. 389).

Frühlingskranz aus dem Plauenschen Grunde bei Dresden (14).

Muscheln von der Insel Rügen (15).

Lieder aus Franzensbad bei Eger (13).

Vaterländisches (10).

Vermischtes (31), changing title of *Der Fiedler vom Rhein* (Fouqué's *Frauentaschenbuch für 1818*. Nürnberg, p. 374) to *Hier und dort*, and omitting *Sonntag* (*idem.* 1819, p. 50 ff.). Omitting also *Malers Abendlied* and *Waldlied* (*Ascania*, Dessau, 1820, signed *Sigismund*), *Der Liebe Jahreszeit*, *Der Liebe Zeit*, *Nachwandlerin Liebe* (*Urania*, 1822, p. 389 ff.), *Der blaue Mondschein*, *Der Ausflug eines jungen Elfen*, *Kein Liedchen mehr! Mein erstes Sonett*, *Die Enklave* (Arthur Müller: *Moderne Reliquien*, Berlin, 1845, pp. 44-60).

Erotische Tändeleien (11).

Berenice: ein erotischer Spaziergang (22).

Devisen zu Bonbons (16).

Zweiter Theil:

Die Monate (13).

Epigramme aus Rom (9).

Lieder aus dem Meerbusen von Salerno (11).

Ständchen in Ritornellen aus Albano (25).

Tafellieder für Liedertafeln (45), omitting the drinking song (without title), published in *Rom, Römer u. Römerinnen*, Berlin, 1820, II, 188-192).

Die schöne Kellnerin von Bacharach und ihre Gäste (10).

Reime aus den Inseln des Archipelagus (28).

Griechenlieder (53).

Epigramme (300).

Deutsche Reimsprüche (9).

The above list completes the known poems of Müller, with the exception of his contributions to the *Bundesblüthen* (von Georg Grafen von Blankensee, Wilh. Hensel, Friedrich Grafen von Kalckreuth, Wilh. Müller und Wilh. von Studnitz. Berlin, 1816), which are following:

An die Leser.

Morgenlied am Tage der ersten Schlacht.

Erinnerung und Hoffnung.

Leichenstein meines Freundes Ludwig Bornemann.

Dithyramb. Geschrieben in der Neujahrsnacht 1813.

Die zerbrochene Zither. Romanze.

Der Verbannte. Romanze.

Der Ritter und die Dirne. Romanze.

Die Blutbecher. Romanze.

Das Band. Romanze.

Ständchen.

Die erste Rose.

Die letzte Rose.

Märliedchen.

Amors Triumph.

Weckt sie nicht!

Epigramme (18).

And the poem which appeared in the *Gedichte aus den hinterlassenen Papieren eines reisenden Waldhornisten* (Dessau, 1821), but not in the collected works (1830):

*Die Blutorange. Epistel aus Sorrent.*¹

¹ For part of above information I am indebted to Prof. J. T. Hatfield of Northwestern University, to whom I owe many another helpful suggestion. I desire to make here public acknowledgment of my obligation to him as well as to Prof. C. von Klenze of the University of Chicago.

INTRODUCTION.

IT was a ballad of Müller's that caused Longfellow's midnight pilgrimage to the tomb of Bishop John De-foucris in the cathedral at Montefiascone,¹ and the second book of *Hyperion* contains enthusiastic words on the *Songs of a Wandering Hornplayer*, as well as translations of two of them. Alfred Baskerville² translated three songs and Chas. T. Brooks (1813-1883) still others. In two pamphlets of recent date³ Prof. Hatfield has given American readers an appreciative estimate of Müller's verse, a service already rendered the poet in England by Dr. Buchheim⁴ and C. M. Aikman.⁵ Prof. Hatfield has caught the spirit of Müller's songs in his published English renderings of six of them, besides a half-score of the *Epigramme*, chosen at random. Last but not least among Müller-translators are Mr. Thomas H. Moore⁶ and Prof. Froude.⁷ Nothing else worthy of mention has been done for Müller in America.⁸

The list of permanent reference to Müller in Germany is short. Two biographies of him exist; one written the year of his death (1827) by his friend Gustav Schwab,⁹ the

¹ Cf. *Outre-Mer; Italy*, and Sprenger: *Zu W. M.'s Romanze 'Est, est!'* *ZfdPh.* XXV, p. 142.

² *The Poetry of Germany*. Philadelphia (Jno. Weik), 1856.²

³ *The Poetry of W. M.* (Repr. f. *Methodist Review*), 1895. *The Earliest Poems of W. M.* (Repr. f. *Publ. of MLA.*, vol. XIII, no. 2). Baltimore, 1898; cf. also his *W. M.'s Dichtungen* in 'Der Westen' (Chicago, Feb. 6, 1898), vol. XLIV, no. 6.

⁴ Cf. Introd. to his *Deutsche Lyrik*. London, 1883, and elsewhere.

⁵ *Poems from the German*. London, 1892.

⁶ *The Maiden and the Brook*: a romance of the wander-year, being a cycle of 20 songs known as *Die schöne Müllerin*, written by W. M. and set to music by Fr. Schubert: op. 25. Done into English in the original rhythms by T. H. Moore. Sung by Mr. David Bispham.

⁷ Cf. his translation of *Vineta*, published in *Literary Recollections* of Max Müller: *Cosmopolis*, IV, 630 ff., and repr. in *Auld Lang Syne* (N. Y., 1898), p. 50.

⁸ Guido Stempel's: *Wilh. Müller. A sketch of his life and works*. *Germania* (Boston, May, 1894), VI, 14 ff. is an adaptation of Schwab's biography of W. M.

⁹ Prefixed to *Gedichte von W. M.* (Leipzig, 1868).

other by his son, Prof. Max Müller of Oxford.¹ A magazine article,² a study of the Greek songs,³ a chronicle of the festivities attendant on the unveiling of the poet's bust in Dessau (1891),⁴ a preface to the last authoritative edition of his poems (1868),⁵ make up the sum total.⁶ Müller comes to casual mention in the histories of German literature,⁷ where he is classed with the Romantic School, in popular anthologies of German poetry, which rarely omit to print a handful of his songs, and in special instances because of his philhellenism, or his influence upon Heine.⁸ Newspaper articles of the year which marked the 100th anniversary of his birth (1894)⁹ offer no new material. New

¹ ADBiogr., XXII, 683 ff.

² Max Friedlaender: *Die Entstehung der Müllerlieder*. *Deut. Rundschau*, LXXIII, 301 ff., though the story of the composition and the authorship of the *Müllerlieder* is told in L. Rellstab's *Biographie Ludwig Bergers* (Berlin, 1846, p. 110 ff.), as nowhere else: also Supplement z. *Schubert Album*, Leipzig (nd) Peters, and *Das Urbild der schönen Müllerin* in *Hamb. Corr.*, Nr. 901. *Frankfurter Ztg.*, Nr. 356.

³ R. Arnold, *Euphorion* (2tes Ergänzungsheft, 1896), p. 117 ff. Repr. as *Der deutsche Philhellenismus*. Bayreuth, 1896.

⁴ Hosäus: *Das W. M. Denkmal*. Dessau, 1891. Cf. also A. Rümelin, *W. M. Rede*, *Magdeburger Ztg.*, Nr. 498, and *Aus anhaltischem Golde* von W. Arminius. Dessau, 1893, p. 65.

⁵ English translation in *Chips from a German Workshop*.

⁶ Unless we include the group of 4 memorial poems publ. by Wilh. Kilzer in Dörings *Frauentaschenbuch*, 1829, pp. 169 ff.

⁷ Koberstein (5te Aufl., 1873) devotes 28 lines to him: Gervinus (5te Aufl., 1874) 5 words: Hillebrand (3te Aufl., 1875) 20 lines: Scherr (7te Aufl., 1887) 5 lines: Vilmar (23te Aufl., 1890) 5 lines: Scherer (6te Aufl., 1891) 1 page: Kurz (8te Aufl., 1891) 4½ pages: König (23te Aufl., 1893) 4½ pages: Wackernagel (1894) 25 lines: Voigt und Koch (1897) 9 lines.

⁸ Goetze's promised *Abhandlung über den Einfluss W. M.'s auf Heine* has not yet (Dec. 1898) appeared.

⁹ E. g.—L. Geiger, *Wilh. Müller*, *Frankfurter Ztg.*, Nr. 278. Anon. *Zur Erinnerung an W. M.*, *Weser Ztg.* (Bremen), Nr. 17225/6. L. Fränkel, *Wissensch. Beil. d. Leipziger Ztg.*, Nr. 120. A. Kohut, *Nord u. Süd*, LXXVI, p. 235 ff. R. Opitz, *Blätter f. litt. Unterhaltung*, p. 625 ff. *Über Land u. Meer*, LXXII, p. 1054/5. *Nordd. Allgem. Ztg.*, Nr. 470. *Schwäbische Kronik* (Beil. zur *Schwäb. Merkur*), Nr. 234. *Schlesische Ztg.*, Nr. 702. *Berliner Börs. Cour.*, Nr. 470. R. Plöhn, *Deut. Dichterheim*, XIV, p. 499 ff. F. Wernicke, *Didaskalia* (Beibl. z. *Frankfurter Journal*), Nr. 235. H. Welti, *Wilh. Müller, Beilage z. Voss. Ztg.*, Nr. 40. E. Heilborn, *Magazin für Litt. des In- und Auslandes*, LXIII, p. 1249 ff.—quoted from *Jahresberichte f. n. d. Litteraturgesch.*, vol. 5 (1894), sec. IV, 2b. 13.

sources for biography and criticism are practically closed by the burning of the Basedow house in Dessau, when the personal papers of the poet were destroyed.¹

Few poets as little read as Müller have been so widely sung;² his songs, like those of Heine and Eichendorff, have seemed to call for composition, while the lyrics of Tieck, Arnim, Brentano and Schwab have remained for the most part unsung.³ The settings of Franz Schubert and minor composers have given Müller's songs publicity. It is hard to tell in such a case how much librettist owes composer, how much composer owes librettist—a problem made doubly difficult by admitting that third factor in all song, viz., the power and personality of its interpreter.⁴ The totally inadequate translations into English of Müller's and Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Die Winterreise* serve to teach how a poor text may be saved by a clinging melody or a pleasing voice. Yet it was certainly the popular tone (*Volksmässigkeit*) of Müller's lyrics as well as the simplicity of their construction,⁵ which made them the subjects for unusual musical composition; which caused Schubert and Berger, Methfessel and Tomaschek, Fr. Schneider and Bernhard Klein to set them to unaffected melodies; which gained for their author the friendship of von Weber. Other composers of Müller's songs are Friedr. Fesca, Karl Reissiger, C. Schulz, A. Neithardt, Louis Spohr, Carl Zöllner, Franz Abt, Conradin Kreutzer, Andreas Kretzschmer, Aug. Mühling, Carl Curschmann,

¹ Except (perhaps) letters of W. M. in the possession of his publishers, Brockhaus, to which access is denied.

² Dr. Arnold (*l. c.* 139) asserts: 'Our generation knows Müller almost solely as the poet of Schubert.' Cf. for a like statement Ernst von Wildenbruch's introduction to *Hedwig v. Olfers' Gedichte* (Berlin, 1892), p. xxiv.

³ Cf. Minor, *Zum Jubiläum Eichendorffs*, *ZfdPh.*, XXI, 226.

⁴ Cf. Holtei (*Briefe an Tieck*, Breslau, 1864, III, 45) for a discussion of Schubert's and Stockhausen's part in the popularity of the miller songs, and Hosäus (*l. c.* 23) for a description of their rendition by Jenny Lind Goldschmidt.

⁵ M.'s songs, aside from those imitated after foreign models, are written chiefly in the simplest metre of the *Volkslied*, making frequent use of the doggerel stanza or quatrain.

A. Wendt and Fanny Mendelssohn—a formidable list! What Liszt said of Heine can be applied with equal truth to Müller: ‘As a poet he was a musician.’¹

Many of Müller’s songs are like Volkslieder in structure and spirit, some few of them would seem to have become popular in as true a sense as any 16th century Volkslied; for they have gone wherever the German language is spoken, and a recent tribute shows that they have penetrated to every corner of America.²

It may be possible, by considering the meaning of this written tribute, to hit upon the keynote of Müller’s popularity and the reason for it. Criticism has assigned Müller a modest niche near to Byron among the poets of freedom, and called him *Griechenmüller*; it has known him too as a poet of German wine, whose songs have been sung at many a convivial table³—but to an equal degree he is also, if judged by his most popular lyrics, the poet of wandering, *vagorum archipoeta*.

From the times of the tribal migrations, down through the middle age, when Europe attempted to wrest the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the unbelievers, when ‘scholars were wont to roam around the world till much learning made them mad,’⁴ when knight and strolling player, soldier and monk wandered on every bypath and through every forest, down to that near present when journeyman prentice, art-student and tourist make wayside inns a possibility in defiance of railroad and main-traveled causeway—all these years the German has been a wanderer upon the face of the earth.

Germans have wandered from their native land to colo-

¹ Hatfield (*Poetry of W. M.*) compares Müller with Sidney Lanier, and quotes M.’s own words regarding his musical gift.

² Prof. Max Müller was invited to be present at the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the 1st German colony on American soil in the following words:

‘We think we can count upon your presence with us at least in spirit, for your immortal father, as he lives in his songs, has been companion to us Germans everywhere in America, and will add his sanction to our festival.’ Hosäus (*l. c.* 17).

³ Cf. Heine’s *Harzreise*. SW (Elster), III, 62. Hatfield, *l. c.* 9.

⁴ Symonds, *Wine, Women and Song*. London, 1884. 17.

nise new lands across the sea, till Philadelphia and Baltimore' turn up in Hessian Volkslieder, sung 'to a beautiful and lively melody,' till Chicago, five thousand miles from Berlin, is the third German city in the world: many have remained behind to dwell within narrower confines, but well-worn knapsack and staff in the hallway of these stay-at-homes tell of untiring *Abstecher* and *Ausflüge*. The artisan upon completion of prescribed apprenticeship seeks a new horizon with each sun, the student changes his university with the changing seasons.

Are *Wanderlieder* hailed as a suitable art expression of this migratory habit, that has become wellnigh an instinct in Germany, that dominates artisan and student alike? When Müller sings his songs of the Rhenish apprentice, of the wandering hornplayer, of the postillion at the mountain tavern, of the peripatetic philosopher, of the green-clad hunter, of the miller and attendant brook, of the Prague musician who owns allegiance to a two-fold Bohemia, does he appeal to one single sect or confession, one party or class in Germany? Or, making use of the freemasonry of travel, like the poet of the Canterbury pilgrimage, does he touch all hearts, high and low?

Are these songs of Müller's for piano accompaniment alone, for students returning from *Kneipe*, for choral interpretation by singing societies? Or have they 'accompanied the Germans in America everywhere,' sung there, and perhaps in other lands, by the emigrant who carries home in the bundle on his back and its songs freighted with memories on his lips? And has, for the sake of example, Müller's *Wohin* ('*Ich hört' ein Bächlein rauschen*') like Uhland's *Der gute Kamerad*,² or Eichendorff's *Zerbrochenes Ringlein*,³ become a Volkslied?

¹ O. Böckel, *Deutsche Volkslieder aus Oberhessen*. Marburg, 1885. Nos. 45 and 59.

Und als wir kamen nach *Baltimore*,
Da reckten wir die Hand empor.
Uns're Schwestern sind schon drüben
In *Philadelphia*.

² Cf. Wackernell, *Das deutsche Volkslied*. Hamburg, 1890, p. 4 (quoting Steinthal, *Zs. f. Völkerpsychologie*, XI, 1 ff.).

³ Cf. Vilmar, *Handbüchlein* (1867), 194.

Is the popularity which has fallen to Müller due to his choice of a subject which interests his whole people (i. e. wandering) or is the *Wanderlust* which permeates his lyrics merely his heritage as a Romanticist; is his restlessness real, or is it the literary, not to say sentimental, restlessness which tinged his views on Greek independence? Finally, are the figures in his *Wanderlieder* real, or are they traditional puppets handed down to him by Uhland and Eichendorff?

Some of these sentences must remain questions, for they can not all be determined with the slight material at hand. No one has as yet written the chapter on Wilhelm Müller's songs in America, although material for such a title surely exists; and yet this must be dealt with and weighed by any one who would compass the influence exerted by Müller today, who would decide in how far he was an original artist, in how far he trod in the steps of his predecessors. The investigator who finds himself about to agree with Arnold's statement, 'Our generation knows M. almost solely as the poet of Schubert,' must remember that if Müller has left Germany as a well-known lyricist, it may have been to live in his songs, as his son has done in his studies, in a foreign country. It is not enough to draw conclusions with regard to Müller from the status of his popularity in the German Empire political: one must stretch the horizon to include that larger Germany which exists in America today. The fact must not be lost sight of that if Müller's name is being forgotten, while his songs continue to live, he is beginning to fulfill the conditions until recently imposed upon all folk-poets,

¹ Cf. Proelsz, *Das junge Deutschland*. Stuttgart, 1892. 45: Dass die Auffassung der Griechen . . . als Freiheitskämpfer zumeist eine romantische war, entsprach ebenso der Bildung der Zeit, wie das romantische Hinauspilgern deutscher Freiheitsschwärmer zur Theilnahme an den Kämpfen fremder Nationen für deren politische Freiheit, zu welchem Byron ein so glänzendes Beispiel gegeben. . . . Also Baker, *Americana Germanica*, I, 2, 62.

² Suggested by Biese. *Entwicklung des Naturgefühls im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit*, 2e Ausg., Leipzig, 1892, p. 453, note 1; and Wackernagel, *Gedächtnisrede auf Ludw. Uhland* (in Gelzer's *Protestant. Monatsblätter*, 1863, p. 117). Minor, *l. c.* 226.

viz., that their very names must not exist, unless their productions cared to be known as 'art-poems.'¹

Aside from the question of wandering, Müller's lyrics were popular for three distinct reasons at least: for the kinship which many of them have with the older Volkslieder, a fact too evident for denial: for the development by Müller of poetical form as a vehicle of dramatic expression along lines already laid down by Goethe and Uhland² (what Prof. Koch designated as Müller's conspicuous lyrical gift³): lastly, to the simple individuality of the poet himself—sentimental, bold and humorous by turns.

The present writing is concerned primarily with the first of these theses: that an evident kinship exists between the older Volkslieder and the lyrics of Müller, and it is intended to measure the extent of that influence. In most instances the *Wunderhorn* is the collection which has been used as a convenient standard by which to determine the kinship referred to, for, although other well-known collections of Volkslieder⁴ had been published in Germany before the appearance of Müller's 77 *Lieder aus den hinter-*

¹ In this connection Rümelin says (Hosäus. *l. c.* 12): 'The person who does not read his (Müller's) songs, often sings them as he does the old Volkslied, without knowing the poet's name.' For an identical statement cf. Buchheim, *l. c.* p. xiii.

² Cf. especially the *Frühlingslieder* and *Wanderlieder* of Uhland, although these lack the intensity and personality of Müller's songs. Heine's comparison of the two poets (*Die romantische Schule*, III) is interesting. 'In the imitation of the German Volkslied, Müller accords perfectly with Herr Uhland; it seems to me even that on such ground he is often happier than Uhland and surpasses him in naturalness. He understood better the spirit of the old song forms and therefore did not need to imitate their external structure; consequently we discover in Müller a freer treatment of the transitions, and a consistent avoidance of all time-honored turns and forms of expression.' Quoted from the preface to Curt Müller's *Gedichte von Wilh. Müller. Gesamt-Ausgabe. Mit einer biographischen Einleitung u. einem Vorwort*. Leipzig (Reclam) 1894.

Cf. also the correspondence between Schiller and Goethe during the latter's Swiss sojourn in 1797 (*Briefwechsel*, 1828-1829), III, 239, 240, 248, 249, 250, 266, 267, 307, 308, 309, 317, 321, 322. Also R. M. Meyer, *Goethe* (Berlin 1895), p. 493. Hatfield (*l. c.*), 2, 3. Schwab (*l. c.*) XXIII.

³ In the 1st edition of his *Geschichte d. d. Litteratur* (Sammlung Göschen). The statement is omitted in the second edition (Stuttgart, 1895).

⁴ Enumerated in Kertbeny: *Volksliederquellen in d. d. Litt.*, Halle 1851. Paul's *Grundriss* II, 762 *et seq.* Erk-Böhme, *Deutscher Liederhort*, Leip-

*lassen*en Papieren eines reisenden Waldhornisten (1821)¹ and reminiscences from one or more of these dwell in hidden corners of his songs, yet the *Wunderhorn* has answered every purpose, containing as it does the best songs from many of the older collections.²

A few of Müller's songs are Volkslieder.³ The smell of the soil in them is less than it was in their prototypes, the characters in them have been softened and idealized, the roughness of their metre has been polished, and yet they exercise upon a living generation a similar influence to that which certain *Wunderhorn* songs did upon a past generation. Is the similarity one of the eye or the ear only? Is there a certain technique, a conscious trick of imitation, by applying which the modern poet may achieve vogue?

Conscious imitation must concern itself almost exclusively with the outward form of a Volkslied.⁴ Now and

zig, 1893, I, xliii-xlix. Böhme, *Altdeutsches Liederbuch*, Leipzig, 1877, pp. 799-803, et al. Of these Herder's *Volkslieder* (1777-1778), Nicolai's *Almanach* (1777-1778), Elwert's *Ungedruckte (sic!) Reste alten Gesangs* (1784) Ziska und Schottky's *Oesterreichische Volkslieder* (1819), and Görres *Altdeutsche Volks- und Meisterlieder* (1817) have been examined. Büsching und von der Hagen's *Sammlung deutscher Volkslieder* (1807) and Meinert's *Alle teutsche Volkslieder* (1817) could not be secured.

¹ The very title *Waldhornistenlieder* is an intentional borrowing from the Volkslied. Cf. e. g. *Bragur*, vol. 3, p. 268: 'Die Waldhornstücke scheinen unter dem Volke so allgemein zu gefallen, dass viele andere Volkslieder und besonders die Balladen nach Jäger-Melodien gedichtet und gesungen werden.'

² The only collections mentioned by Müller are Herder's and the *Wunderhorn*. Cf. M.'s *Vermischte Schriften* (Leipzig, 1830) IV, 103, though Büsching und von der Hagen's book was doubtless known to him. Cf. *Schr.* IV, 212, where he speaks of 'der um das vaterländische Alterthum vielverdiente Prof. Büsching.'

³ Accepting Scherer's term: 'There is no other distinguishing mark by which the Volkslied may be known but wide dissemination and general favour.' *Hist. of Germ. Lit.*, Amer. edit., New York, 1886, I, 248. The German word is retained because no English word adequately translates it. Folk-song, popular song, people's song, ballad, communal song (suggested by Prof. Gummere), are all unsatisfactory.

⁴ In his early youth Heine conceived a poem to be popular if its outward form gave that expression, and he thought he had discovered a salient characteristic of the Volkslied in a grammatical incorrectitude and an inartistic gawkinsness (Cf. e. g. *Traumbilder*, 2, 7, 8. addressed to Josefa

then a theme or a motive may lend a popular cast to a song, irrespective of the form in which it is clothed, but the poem containing it would not be a Volkslied. The real essence of a Volkslied, the spirit of it, the simplicity and directness and depth of it can not be fashioned after a set of prescribed rules.

If Wilhelm Müller is a conscious imitator of the Volkslied then, and sets down in a lyric of his own the archaising diction, the obsolete orthography, the quaint syntax or the clumsy rhetorical structure¹ of a song in the *Wunderhorn*, the resultant is not a Volkslied. He may thereby attain an apparent artlessness, a naïveté, a sort of child-like awkwardness which appeals to the reader's eye, but little more than this.² And he is in danger of reaping by such imitation a sore monotony and an irritating lameness, and of descending into mere mannerism, as Victor Hehn has (unjustly) suggested was the case with Bürger in his treatment of *Lenore*.³

On the other hand, let it be assumed that, irrespective of external form, Müller's lyric be instinct with the spirit of the Volkslied, that Müller has mastered the art teaching

the executioner's daughter). Later on by the perusal of M.'s poems Heine saw how out of inherited Volkslied-forms new ones just as popular may be built up, but without the old clumsy and gauche constructions. Cf. letter from H. to M. printed in *H. H.'s Autobiographie*, ed. Karpeles, Berlin, 1888, pp. 149, 150; in Prof. Max Müller's *Auld Lang Syne* (N. Y. 1898) pp. 58-59, and *Cosmopolis* IV, 630-636. For H.'s attitude towards the Volkslied cf. Huffer *Aus dem Leben H. H.'s*, Berlin, 1878. Karpeles *H. u. seine Zeitgenossen* (Berlin, 1888), pp. 67-75. Hessel, *H. H. u. d. d. Volkslied*, Köln. Ztg. (22 Feb.) 1887. Seelig, *Die dichterische Sprache in Heines 'Buch der Lieder.'* Halle (dissert.) 1891. Greinz, *H. H. u. d. d. Volkslied*, Neuwied. 1894. Goetze, *H. H.'s Buch der Lieder u. sein Verhältnis z. d. Volkslied*, Halle (Dissert.) 1895—a suggestive study.

¹ As Kerner, for example, certainly did. 'One would think his muse a child (says Müller) who had learned this quaint speech from wise old men and women that had related to him wonderful tales, which the muse could repeat in no other language . . . but none the less does this repetition of a dead and gone tongue remain a forced thing, excluding, as it does, more or less, the appearance of nature and life.'

² This question is discussed in Hassenstein, *Ludwig Uhland*, Leipz. 1887, pp. 126-130.

³ *Gedanken über Goethe*, Berlin, 1888, pp. 68-72.

of the Volkslied and applied it.¹ The result will be a popular song indeed, for it will appeal to the human nature underlying any veneer.²

It is *the* Volkslied then, and not *a* Volkslied which the modern poet must make live again. Similarity in outward form between Volkslied and lyric of Müller may exist without conscious imitation on the part of the latter, for the same ideas within certain human limits are expressed in much the same terminology, and this is truest just in lyric poetry, where the emotions of the heart find readiest and most natural expression. Certain simple figures of syntax, therefore, will prevail in the popular poetry of all times and nations, because they mirror forth so ingenuously the moment under description, and as surely will stilted and

¹ Cf. Waldberg, *Goethe und das Volkslied*, Berlin 1889, p. 21. Also Hauffen, *Leben u. Fühlen im d. Volkslied*, Prag. pp. 5, 6, who says: 'The boundary (between Volkslied and Kunstlied) is not a sharply defined one. From the most objective Volkslieder to the most subjective song of a modern poet, there are a hundred transition stages. Because the Volkslied is a real order of poetry, it must accord exactly with the most perfect growths of our artistic lyric verse, and so we realize indeed that there exists a mysterious association between genius and the taste of the people.'

² Müller's own words (*Schr.* IV, 105) are: 'It is an incurable error on the part of certain fashionable poets of very recent date (1825) that they imagine they are singing Volkslieder when they patch together obsolete phrases, awkward periods and indecencies from their old predecessors into new combinations. No poetic genre needs to be so much in harmony with the spirit of the age as the lyric does: for its enjoyment and its influence, far removed from study of every kind, pass living from lip to lip, and have small time for explanations. The common people are by no means attracted by such patriarchal adornment—no matter how common the person is, he still considers himself too knowing and refined for such, and takes it amiss that he is not credited with a more modern taste. The so-called old-German school of poetry has done its level best in this perversity—a little more, and new Volkslieder in the dialect of the *Ludwigslied* would have been current. And why not, pray? For that dialect has at least lived, but the language of the new-fangled Volkslieder has never lived. What man can breathe the breath of life into the still-born? Bürger and Goethe, separate as they are in spirit, stand as the sole model. In both, it is true, can be traced the influence of the old Volkslied, but this influence repeats itself in their songs no more noticeably than, let us say, do the features of a forefather repeat themselves in the face of a descendant. The other archaizing lyric poets, however, offer us nothing better than a manufactured death-mask. The peculiar nature of the Volkslied is the immediateness of its influence upon life, and life can be laid hold on only by life itself.'

conscious figures be absent. These figures are useful for study, however, only as a means towards a clearly recognizable end, and not in or of themselves, for they are the result and not the cause.

Thus far it has been tacitly assumed that Volkslied was a word easily understood and fitly defined¹—a consummation devoutly to be wished, but one as yet unrealized—for, if this were true, collectors would not include in their editions a mass of songs not Volkslieder, and investigators (otherwise above reproach) would not insist upon distinctions impossible to carry out in practice.

Though an enumeration of the attempts to define Volkslied² would of itself fill a volume, and include the names of many scholars well-known in the history of literature, still Goethe's complaint that nobody seems to understand the much-cited term holds good today. The difficulty in finding a proper definition has been many-sided. Some have attached too much importance to the part which melody plays in the matter, some too little. Some would

¹ How difficult it is to avoid hair-splitting distinction may be seen by consulting Böckel (*l. c.*) of which this paragraph is a virtual translation. He contends (LIX) that the line between Volkslied and not-Volkslied can nowhere be sharply drawn (because the concept Volkslied can never be exhaustively defined), yet he proceeds (CXXVIII) to set up three classes.

a. *Volkstümliche Kunstgedichte*. Includes songs from the *Banise*, Miller's *Sigwart*, Kotzebue and Heine, likewise Goethe, Schiller, Uhland and Eichendorff, besides countless half- or wholly-forgotten poets.

b. *Volksmässige Lieder* (an intermediate species). Includes many soldier songs, songs of guilds and handicrafts, many historical songs and occasional poems. A mixture of imitated learned verse with popular modes of speech and presentation.

c. *Volkslieder*.

² The curious may consult: Böhme *Ad. Liederb.*, XXI, *Volkst. L. d. Deutschen*, *Vorwort*. Deut. L. *im Volkslied*, DNL. XIII, p. IX. Uhland, *Schriften* (1866) II *Einltg.* Müllenhoff, *Sagen, Märchen, Lieder*, XXX. Leimbach, *Einf. i. d. d. Volkslied*, p. 7. G. Scherer, *Jungbrunnen, Vorwort*. Gummere, *O. Engl. Ballads*, XXVI. White, *Deutsche Volkslieder*. N. Y. 1892, p. 275, or the prefaces to other collections, such as Erks *Liederhort*, Liliencrons *Hist. Lieder d. Deutschen*, etc., etc.

Also Schlegel, *Gesch. d. rom. Lit.* (1884), p. 160. Schuré, *Gesch. d. d. L.* (1884), 64. Weckerlin, *La chanson pop.* (1886), p. V. Heinr. Meyer, DNL. LXXIV. 1. 2, p. LV.

use the term *Volkslied* in a narrow sense, to designate a single historical species of song carefully walled-in, instead of a dozen differing species. Others have grown vague and mysterious over the word *Volk-*, the van led by Wilh. Schlegel and the Grimms, so much so, that it has become necessary for prefaces to discuss the word *Volk-*, which used to mean the people in its entirety, but which now means the lower classes: the result often approaching a mere juggling with names. Others again, like Longfellow, Th. Storm, Symonds or Andrew Lang,¹ mistake poetic fancy for definition, and thus become unsafe guides for the unwary.

Thus much is sure. A *Volkslied* is a song from whatever source, of whatever form, sung for a long time by all kinds and conditions of people.

Besides this or beyond this no defining is possible. The *Song of Master Hildebrand* and Eichendorff's *In einem kühlen Grunde* are alike *Volkslieder*, Luther's *A mighty fortress*,² Müller's *Im Krug zum grünen Kranze* and the *Muscatel Song* are *Volkslieder*, Tauler's *Christmas Carol* from the 14th century and Holtei's *Schier dreissig Jahre* from the 19th.

Whether author is known or forgotten does not, can not

¹ Cf. *Hyperion*, Book II. *Immensee. Wine, Women and Song*, p. 25. White, *D Volksl.*, p. 277.

² Although the most recent and scholarly of all essays on the nature of the *Volkslied* (John Meier, *Volkslied und Kunstlied in Deutschland*, *Beil. z. Allgem. Ztg.* München, März, 1898. Nos. 53-54) would in most cases exclude the church-hymn (*Kirchenlied*) from the *Volkslieder*. The author contends (No. 54, p. 2): 'The church hymn can hardly be regarded as a *Volkslied*, because the people recognise its right to a separate individuality; they know, for instance, that such a song was composed by Luther, such a song by Paul Gerhard, and above all the Text and, in a less degree, the Melody of the church songs exert a certain authority. It will be the endeavor of the singer to reproduce each of these, just as it has been handed down to him. Such songs have something awe-inspiring and venerable about them: the song itself is the authority and not the singer.' And yet, in the opinion of the present writer, such argument is not final. The reason why one begins to sing *A mighty fortress* is that one was taught it textually in church—but the reason why one *continues* to sing it, and never tires of it, is that it has become part of one and one's neighbor: in short, it has become a *Volkslied*.

alter the song¹—whether author is plough-boy, churchman, or king does not alter it—whether text is epic, lyric or dramatic in cast is immaterial; so long as the song fits the throat of the people. For purposes of classification all these things are important, but while scholars are classifying songs, the people are singing them, and the real arbiter after all is said and done is *vox populi*.²

¹ With all deference to Prof. White, who excludes from his collection (*Deut. Volkslieder*) all lyrics by known authors, following in this the example of his colleague, Prof. T. F. Crane (*Chansons populaires de la France*, N.Y. 1891), because these lyrics 'nicht aus dem Volksbewusstsein herausgesungen wurden sondern demselben eingesungen werden sollten.' This quoted phrase (of Goedeke's) is specious, but not necessarily logical: for in order to be *herausgesungen*, something must first be *eingesungen*, and no song can exist without a personality (once known, if later forgotten) as author—unless one accept as scientific Rückert's description of the origin of a Volkslied:

*Das schönste ward gedichtet
Von keines Dichters Mund.*

.
*Es hat sich selbst geboren,
Wie eine Blume spriesst,
Und wie aus Felsenthoren
Ein Brunnquell sich ergiesst.*

Cf. also A. Jeitteles: *Beiträge zur Charakteristik d. d. Volksliedes* (ZföVh. III, 257 ff.): 'It is not an essential in the definition of the Volkslied that the author should be unknown, but rather that word and melody be in unison and that the text betray a naïve attitude towards nature and life.' Cf. also Herm. Fischer (Introduction to 3d edit. of Uhlands *Volkslieder*, p. 4). Stuttgart (nd) 1893.

² Carl Köhler and J. Meier (*Volkslieder v. d. Mosel u. Saar*, Halle, 1896) adopted the principle that 'everything which the people sing or recite, and look upon as a Volkslied be noted, no matter if investigation prove it to be also an art-song.' Becker's *Rheinischer Volksliederborn* (Neuwied 1892) and Wolfram's *Nassauische Volkslieder* (Berlin, 1894) include many so-called volkstümliche Lieder. Cf. also J. Meier's *Volkstümliche u. kunstmässige Elemente in der Schnaderhüpfelpoesie* (Beil. z. Allg. Ztg., München, Oct. 6, 1898, no. 226).

W. Müller himself divided Volkslied into no sub-heads (cf. his critique of Rückert's *Östliche Rosen*, 1822): 'The larger part of Rückert's songs would have become Volkslieder, and deserved to have done so, side by side with Körner's, Schenkendorf's and certain of Arndt's, if the period which they celebrated had not been all too soon obliterated from the enraptured memory of the people.' Elsewhere he speaks of the patriotic Volkslieder of Uhland.

Brevity is a necessity in Volkslieder today, far more so than formerly. The time when any but professional singers memorize long scores of weary ballads is past: a few short stanzas satisfy the needs of the people, and what is not readily remembered is either confused beyond point of recognition, or, more often perhaps, simply omitted. Yet Vilmar¹ tells of ballads 30 and 40 stanzas long, which were not only declaimed to past generations, not only sung to them by peripatetic minstrels (*Marktsänger, Bänkelsänger*), but sung by them as well: he considers that in certain parts of Germany the custom of singing ballads of such length endures to the present day, though certainly as the exception, not as the rule.

For good reason, too. The development of individualism in Germany did much toward substituting the lyric song for the epic ballad as a form of poetic expression, but a still greater factor in the change was the increasing importance of the time consideration in modern civilization. The shortened song, no less than railroad, telegraph, telephone, electric propulsion for tramway, motor-carriage and bicycle, is an indication of the hurry in recent German life.

Volkslieder must be sung for a considerable season.² A generation or two ago, when travel was hardship, it took

¹ *Handbüchlein*, p. 10. In dealing with songs of exceptional length, however, one must be careful not to assume for them a wide popularity. Cf. e. g. J. Meier (*Beil. z. Allg. Zeitg.*, 1898, no. 54, p. 24): 'Most of the historical songs do not belong among the Volkslieder, for they did not become part of the popular speech and were never disseminated among the people.' How many of the countless historical songs and political songs in Dittfurth's and Liliencron's encyclopaedic collections were ever in wide sense Volkslieder?

² Cf. Böckel, *l. c.* CXXX. 'A proof of the authenticity of a Volkslied is in its power of resistance. Merely popular songs sing themselves out and disappear quickly; not so Volkslieder.' Not so clear is the following statement: 'The Volkslied can only be driven out by the breaking in of culture, which destroys its roots; national custom and tradition.' The particular Volkslied in question may be driven out by the rude entrance of culture, but not the Volkslied in general—for the Volkslied does not die—it changes. If a naïve Volkslied is driven out, it yields to the song of culture: after a season of favor, the latter becomes a Volkslied.

many years for a Volkslied to get into all parts of Germany, or even into every nook and cranny of a single county: today, when the reverse is true, it takes quite as many years to sift out the real Volkslied from the thousand-and-one aspirants to popular favor, which steam-presses and the feuilleton of the daily newspaper would foist upon a trusting public.

The only difference between the *volkstümliche Lied* and the Volkslied is one of time.¹ Müller's *Im Krug zum grünen Kranze* was *volksmässig* when first composed, for it was written in the popular tone, *volkstümlich* when first taken up and sung by the people, and a Volkslied when it outlasted the generation that produced it with no diminution in popular favor. The taste of each new generation is different from (often diametrically opposed to) that of its predecessor—if they both sing widely the same song, it is a Volkslied. The only difference between an ephemeral street-ballad (*Gassenhauer*),² or a popular snatch from a reigning opera, and a Volkslied is in the time they last. It is often contended that the former are silly and mawkish, while the latter is not, but who is to decide as to silliness or mawkishness, if not the people?³ And if the people sing a silly song long enough, it is a Volkslied.⁴

¹ Not, as is frequently asserted, a difference in terms. Cf. e.g. Tiesmeyer, *Das deut. Volkslied*, Osnabrück, 1881, pp. 3, 4: 'The Volkslied belongs to the realm of folk-poetry, but the *volkstümliche Lied* to that of art-poetry. The former deals with subjective experiences and emotions, and yet, also, with those universal among men, often in child-like, naïve manner. The *volkstümliche Lied* is the product of a mind which creates with well-calculated effort, borrows its material frequently from historical fact and moulds it according to the canons of art.' How prone the investigator to insist that the author of the Volkslied be an utterly naïve child of nature; while the author of the *volkstümliche Lied* is perforce a stiffly-starched, extremely conscious person.

² But cf. O. B. *Volkslied und Strassenlied*, Die Gegenwart, 1887, p. 203 et seq.

³ Cf. *Handbüchlein*, p. 8. Vilmar here finds that the songs from the *Banise*, *Sigwart*, Weise's operettas, etc., are not Volkslieder, because of their 'sickly sentimentality,' although they were sung for a long time by many people.

⁴ Yet such statements as the following, met with at every turn, are curious examples of the dominance of tradition: 'We certainly have a long list of

Another fallacious doctrine is that the time for the making of new Volkslieder is irrevocably past. This idea rests upon the notion that Volkslieder of the future must be like those of the past, an impossibility, of course, viewed in the light of the complexity and the changed conditions of present civilization in Germany. Böhme says:¹ 'In our time no more Volkslieder can arise,' and quotes from Vischer (*Aesthetik* III. 1357) as support. Reissmann says:² 'The people made up and sang its songs as long as the art-song remained a stranger to it. But when the art-song, under direction of the Volkslied, rejuvenated itself and found in its new guise an active sympathy and interest among the people, then the Volkslied of sheer necessity died out.'

In 1840 Talvj³ printed the statement that the old songs live in the different parts of Germany only in so far as the population is a singing people, that they die out wherever the population is a reading people. Gustav Meyer⁴

so-called Volkslieder of recent date, i. e., songs which have made their way from modern society to the people. Examined with care and impartiality, however, and measured by the real and the true Volkslied, they are found to compare to it, only as a dead image does to the living nature.' That is to say, the old Volkslieder are *echt*, because they are old. The new Volkslieder (so-called) are *unecht*, because they are new. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

Knortz, *Die deut. Volkslieder u. Märchen*, Zürich, 1889, p. 14, ridicules such a distinction, and Jos. Jacobs (*Folk-Lore*, June 1893, IV. 2, 233 ff.) would break down all barriers between folk-lore and literature, and declares that in the music hall will be found the Volkslieder of to-day. Cf. Gummere, 'The Ballad and Communal Poetry' in *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philol. and Lit.*, V. (1896) 41-56. Also H. Boll, *Die Texte unsrer Volkslieder*. *ZfddU.* XII, 446. Th. Hampe, *Ein Nürnberger Volksdichter des 16n Jhdts.* *Beil. z. Allg. Ztg.* 1898, no. 210. Frz. Bachmann, *Volkslied u. Volksgesang*, *ibid.* no. 267.

¹ *Altdeut. Liederb.* (1877), p. XXIV. It is a change of attitude when he says (*Volkstümliche Lieder d. Deutschen*, 1895, p. XVI): 'In the present state of our civilization he alone can be a poet for his people who adapts himself to the conditions of today, who is at once artist and folk-poet.'

² *Das deutsche Lied*. Cassel, 1861, p. 89.

³ *Versuch einer geschichtlichen Charakteristik d. Volkslieder germanischer Nationen*. Leipzig, p. 387.

⁴ *Essays und Studien zur Sprachgeschichte und Volkskunde*. I (1885), p. 309.

asserts that the natal hour of a literature is likewise the dying hour of a Volkslied; Krejčí¹ adds that where culture has penetrated to the lowest strata of the people, as it has to-day, Volkspoesie disappears entirely. Odell² agrees that the day of popular song is past—the printing press sounding its death-knell; Scheffler³ echoes the thought again when he remarks that the French provinces yield folk-songs in inverse ratio to the diffusion of knowledge to read and write, and Böckel fills out the sentence to meet the existent conditions in Germany. ‘Everywhere,’ he writes, ‘where railroads pass, where factories spring up, where the peasant neglects the cultivation of his land and, for the sake of an added stipend, descends to the work of a factory employee in all these places do national customs and Volkslied die out irrecoverably.’

And this despite the fact that his own collection contains a Volkslied sung to him in Gleiberg, February 9, 1880, where the hero travels by train :

*Auf der Eisenbahn bin ich gefahren
Den sechzehnten Mai,
Ein treues Mädchen hab' ich geliebet
Zu der Ehr' und zu der Treu.*⁴

And, as if to prove that the mention of the modern contrivance⁵ was not a mere slip, the sixth stanza continues :

*Denn so fahren wir auf der Eisenbahn
Immer lustig drauf los.*

¹ *Zs. f. Völkerpsychologie*, XIX (1889), p. 118, s. v. *Das charakteristische Merkmal der Volkspoesie*.

² *Simile and Metaphor in the English and Scottish Ballads*. N. Y. (dissertation), 1893. It is interesting to know that Wilh. Müller held a like belief in 1820 (cf. *Rom, Römer, etc.*, I. 247), but soon changed his mind, as has been shown above.

³ *Französ. Volksdichtung u. Sage*. Leipzig, 1884 (I. 40).

⁴ *I. c.*, no. 58.

⁵ For other mention of modern contrivances, cf. the *Schnaderhüpfel*, which is (in the opinion of many, cf. E. H. Meyer, *Deut. Volkskunde*, p. 316) the most genuine kind of Volkslied. It reaches back to antiquity, being tabooed by the early Christian church, along with the other *psalmi plebei* and the *cantica rustica et inepta* of pagan times (cf. Grasberger, *Die Naturgeschichte des Schnaderhüpfels*, Leipzig, 1896, 18, and G. Meyer, *Essays*, II

Böckel also adds that the Volkslied dies out irrevocably where a ready market for cheap and trashy articles of luxury brings the modest and contented rustic into touch with hitherto unknown enjoyments, and implants in his soul discontent for his lot. Whether the modest and contented rustic ever existed elsewhere than as a figment in the minds of social reformers may be questioned; and yet that will not change the following fact. In the past, when society was divided into two classes, peasant and master, the peasant was the bearer and preserver of the Volkslied—but that does not argue that Volkslieder must die out the moment agricultural implements are improved, the moment new luxuries do away with the assumed old-world simplicity of the unquestioning peasant. On the contrary, a factory, a sweat-shop or a prison can start as true a Volkslied as ever a green field did, because these furnish a background for experiences which are common to all humanity and which touch it. We have seen that a Volkslied can travel by train, as easily as it used to in diligence, or bare-foot over a dusty road—why were it unsafe to prophesy that the Volkslied of the future may telegraph or telephone without overstepping the proprieties?¹

(1893), p. 149), and that it exists in the present is proved by the occurrence of such quatrains as the following:

*Eisenbahn, Eisenbahn,
Locomotiv:
Fert'n a Seidl Wein,
Hoier an Pffff!*

Das Schnaderhüpfel (says Grasberger) ist gelehrig, nimmt Neues auf und modernisirt Altes. Es rechnet noch mit dem Carlin, dem Bancozettel, dem baierischen Groschen, mit Zwanzigern und Thalern, kennt aber auch den papiernen Fünfer und Fünfziger; es fährt noch aufs Roboten und hat mit dem gestrengen Pfleger zu thun, reibt sich aber schon an der Neuschule; dem romantischen Einsiedler im Wald substituirt es allgemach einen gewöhnlichen Geistlichen: es hat noch das blaue Röckl des Jägers in der Barockzeit, den Reifkittel, das Kettenmieder und die Schnallenschuhe im Gedächtniss, nennt aber neben der 'irchenen' Hose auch den 'zwag'-spitzt'n' Frack, etc.

¹ Böckel is answered by Theod. Ebner (*Das deut. Volkslied in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Barmen, 1889) as follows: 'It is not the railroads which

It is as evident an anachronism for a modern Volkslied to go back to 16th century modes of speech, as for a 16th century song to mention things undiscovered until the present generation. The Volkslied lies in the future as well as in the past, and conscious imitation of antiquated Volkslied forms makes the production of a modern poet as affected as a Ronsard pastoral is, when compared with a true Anacreon.

If the similarity between the verses of Müller and the songs of the *Wunderhorn* be chiefly one of the spirit then, investigation must turn to the life of the poet himself, if it wishes to discover how fully his popularity was that of the true folk-poet. First, however, a historical background may be briefly outlined, to ascertain what bearing Müller's attitude had in relation to contemporary events and currents, and to measure the debt which later poets owe him: for Mörike, Geibel and Baumbach have inherited partially from Müller, what he in turn received from Uhland, i. e. a heightened development of musical form, and the introduction of the dramatic element into the elastic medium of lyric poetry.

A sturdy soil, untilled for centuries by other than unskilled hands, had put forth in Germany a crop of vigorous field-flowers, called by many different names, from the *winileodos*¹ of the 8th century to the *Bawrengesang* of the 15th and 16th centuries, known since Herder as Volkslie-

join one country with another, and it is not the telegraph wires which carry thought with lightning swiftness from one place to another, that have put an end to the golden poetry of free and careless wandering, and to its songs full of the forest odors. It is not the constraint of external forms, and of the social position of the individual, so different from former days, which makes life seem to us a sadly mechanical one. It is we ourselves, who have laid on our own spirit this constraint, who have kept our eyes tight-shut to the beauty and charm of that which God has implanted with such spendthrift bounty in our hearts and in his nature—so that we have merely to stretch out our hands, to find that which we bemoan and bewep as a thing long lost. The world is the same as it used to be; the sun shines just as clearly into the heart, and moon and stars glisten still in the canopy of heaven, with the same golden radiance. The human heart still exults in its moments of joy and is fearful in its moments of prescient mournfulness.'

¹ Cf. the capitulars of Charles the Great (789). Uhland, *Volkslieder*³ IV, 164.

der.¹ From time to time cultured men came and regarded these flowers which outlasted stress of wind and weather, only to find them unfragrant and homely. Yet, for want of better, they bore them off, to furnish them out anew, making of them other flowers not so sweet, though bathed in fine perfumes, nor so good to look upon, though painted in bright new colors. Disliking the simplicity of the field-flowers, they refashioned them, giving them fantastic forms. These flowers of culture, gathered from the fields at various times, to be forced in separate hot-houses, are known in literature by different names. Some are called minnesongs and pastorals, others, master-songs, anacreontics and gallant lyrics.² These have lasted out their season and passed away, but the Volkslieder have endured.³

Up till the middle of the 18th century then, men of the people had sung Volkslieder, and men possessed of a certain culture had manufactured them, but without permanent success. Then arose Rousseau to call men back to nature,⁴ Macpherson with the plausible shade of Ossian,⁵ and the English churchman Percy,⁶ all preaching the same evangel in different forms, commending a return to the manners of a past when 'men were as free as the eagles of heaven, and as innocent as the doves.' One symbol of such primeval innocence was the Volkslied, and Rosseau describes the singing of these in the long holiday even-

¹ Cf. E. Schmidt, *Charakteristiken*. Berlin, 1886, p. 202.

² Cf. Burdach, *ZfdA*, XXVII, 343, Rich. M. Meyer, *ZfdA*. XXIX, 121 et seq. Waldberg, *Die deut. Renaissance-Lyrik*, Berlin 1888. Cap. II, Volksdichtung u. Kunstlyrik; also *Die galante Lyrik* (QF. LVI), 27-48.

³ The only class which succeeded in turning the Volkslied into new channels was the clergy with their contrafacta hymns which left the profane song as they found it, with minor substitutions and omissions. So Luther's *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her* is the well-known Volkslied *Von fernen Landen komm ich her*, etc. Cf. Budde, *Preuss. Jahrb.* LXXIII, 482, also *The New World* (Boston), March 1893.

⁴ Notably in the *Nouvelle Héloïse* (1760) and *Emile* (1764).

⁵ *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760).

⁶ *Reliques of Ancient Engl. Poetry* (1765). German translations (besides Herder's) in Ursinus, *Balladen u. Lieder*. Bothe, *Volkslieder*, Berlin 1795. Bodmer, *Allengl. (u. Altschwed) Balladen*, Zürich 1781. Cf. also Wagener, *Das Eindringen von Percys Reliques in Deutschland*. Heidelberg (Diss.) 1897.

ings—'*ces vieilles romances, dont les avis ne sont pas piquants; mais ils ont je ne sais quoi d'antique et de doux.*'¹

While France and England were beginning to break with tradition, a new nature-sense was astir in Germany. Scholars turned curious glances upon the folk-song of foreign peoples, which had hitherto been deemed uninteresting, because barbaric. Hoffmannswaldau and Hagedorn were heralds of this vague but growing interest, Kleist wrote the *Song of a Laplander*, and Lessing published Lithuanian *dainos*. Klopstock wrote his war song in the English ballad metre (1749) and other poets followed, until from Schleswig Holstein to Switzerland swinging military songs, composed in a professedly popular tone, gained a momentary hearing, and Gleim (1758), Weisse (1760), Gerstenberg (1762) and Lavater (1767) achieved thereby a short success.² All efforts were tentative, however, for poets were groping after dimly sensed facts in the dark: not having direction, enthusiasm ran on into absurdity, and an earnest striving after popularity bade fair to yield to parody and caricature. It is typical of the period that Gleim knew no better how to attain popularity than to ape the travesties of Gongora and Moncrif, and that Bürger, five years after Rudolf Raspe had introduced the *Reliques* to Germany, knew no better than to follow him.³

In his *Aesthetica in Nuce* (1762) Hamann had said that poetry, far from being man's most finished product, was man's mother tongue. Then, like a younger Elisha to carry out his master's teachings, came Herder, preaching that men were brothers and poetry their common heritage, the bond between nations: that true song dwelt in the homes of the lowly, to be found there by the seeker. So wrote the young theologian of whom it was truly said that Volkslieder from the fish-market interested him more than dogma,—who swept into a single draught of his

¹ Cf. E. Schmidt, *Richardson, Rousseau u. Goethe*, p. 198, note.

² Cf. Scherer, *GddLit.*, p. 445.

³ Cf. von Klenze, *Die komischen Romanzen der Deutschen im 18. Jhd.* Marburg (Dis.) 1891. Also Grisebach, *Das Goethesche Zeitalter*. Leip. 1891, p. 68, note. Pröhle, *Bürger*. Leip. 1856, p. 11.

drag-net of people's songs the utterances of Moses, Homer and Shakspeare, prose from the arctic zone and monastic pieces from the middle ages.

Bürger abandoned Gleim and placed himself entirely on the side of Herder and his teachings in the *Heart-gushings over Poetry*. Footing on a ballad metre which the preceding century had developed as a model for narrative poetry, Bürger gave Germany its first real ballad, *Lenore* (1774). The other luminaries of the Göttingen constellation succeeded less well, for instead of the native emotional intensity of Bürger, they were forced to make shift with that of the Klopstockian manner, and for Bürger's lively patriotism they had only Germanomania.¹ Hölty, Miller and Claudius² wrote of the cheerful and touching sides of modest domestic happiness and of rustic activity, Voss, himself a peasant's son, wrote his peasant verses, and the cup of affliction of Gottsched's followers was full.

Wiseacres, foremost among them Fr. Nicolai, that centurion in the army of the Philistines (the same who found *Hermann und Dorothea* a poor imitation of Voss' *Luise*) protested vigorously against this canonizing of the Volkslied,³ but only added fuel to the fire already brightly burning. Songs from that 'plateful of slime,' the *Almanach*, though burdened almost to unintelligibility by the freakish spelling of their editor, are alive at the present day. The young Goethe learned of Herder in Strassburg and ended by acquiring a better practical insight into the possibilities of moulding the Volkslied to his uses, than his schoolmaster ever did, or ever could have done. Where Herder ended, Goethe began.⁴

Herder's work with the Volkslied, though he had col-

¹ Prutz, *Göttinger Dichterbund*. Leip. 1841, p. 253.

² Cf. J. Bolte, *Der Bauer im deut. Liede*. Berlin 1890, Vorwort.

³ Although his is the merit to have published the first collection of old and modern Volkslieder, cf. Docens *Misc. zur Gesch. der deut. Lit.*, I (1807), p. 260, s. v. *Altdeutsche Lieder aus dem 16n Jhdt.*, and Hoffmann von Fallersleben, *Unsere volkstüml. Lieder*. Leip. 1869,³ p. XVII.

⁴ Cf. Zurbonsen, *Herder und die Volkspoesie*. Arnsberger Programm, 1888, p. XV.

lected from the whole world massive stones for his building, remained a splendid fragment :¹ Goethe, on the contrary, by his collection of the Alsatian ballads² and his writing of new lyrics after the manner of the old, gave reality to Herder's theorizing and showed masterfully in his most beautiful songs how the ghost of the old Volkslied could be made the moving spirit of the new one. He demonstrated how the modern lyric can be made to approach its prototype, winning for itself thereby a simple structure and a musicality far removed from the elegance and the rigid stiffness of the songs of a previous generation.³ He never lost his interest in the Volkslied through life, and more than once in the course of their correspondence Schiller caught the contagion of it.⁴

¹ Cf. Eichendorff's estimate of Lessing, Hamann and Herder in *Erlebtes*, II. Halle u. Heidelberg, quoted from Dietze, *Eichendorff's Ansicht über romantische Poesie*. Leip. (Disser) 1883.

² Cf. *Ephemerides und Volkslieder* (Neudruck, Seuffert). Heilbronn, 1883, pp. 29-47.

³ Cf. Waldburg, *Goethe u. das Volkslied*. Berlin 1889. Biedermann, *Goethe u. das Volkslied* (G. Forschungen, N. F.). Leip. 1886. Suter, *Das Volkslied u. sein Einfluss auf G.'s Epik.* 1896. Schuré, *GddLiedes*. Minden 1884,³ 283-324, etc., and Wilh. Müller's own testimony (*Vermischte Schr.*, IV, 103): 'The German Volkslied found in Goethe its highest and clearest refinement. It is well known that many of his most beautiful songs and especially those in the ballad-manner, are echoes and reminiscences of German and foreign folk-poetry; he having even taken up in his 'Variationen' whole verses and stanzas from such themes. Thus did the old Volkslied, clarified and refined by his art, enter into a new life, and as the poet drew from the rich, deep well of folk-poetry chords and harmonies, so also did his composer, Reichardt.' The case of Goethe and the Volkslied is also admirably put in Uhland's letter to Karl Mayer (Jan. 29, 1809) in K. Mayer: *L. Uhland, seine Freunde und Zeitgenossen*. Stuttgart 1867. I, 109.

⁴ Though this was the exception and not the rule with Schiller, as is luminously shown by the following excerpt from a letter to W. von Humboldt. Weimar, Aug. 18th, 1803 (cf. Jonas, *Schillers Briefe*, VII, 66): 'I enclose you a song that had its origin in the desire to furnish more worthy words for social singing. The songs of the Germans which one hears rendered in jovial company fall for the most part into the dull and prosaic tone of the masonic songs, because life itself offers no material for poetry; I have chosen, therefore, for this song the poetic ground of the Homeric times, and have had the old heroic figures from the Iliad appear in it. Thus can one get away from the prose of daily life, and wander about in better company.' Surely this is out-heroding even Herder.

And not Goethe alone turned to the Volkslied as his model from the Strassburg period on, but music composers as well, and the settings of songs, which had hitherto been of such difficulty that only trained singers could do them justice, became simple enough for the slightest talent in musical accompaniment.¹ Weisse composed operettas dealing with the delights of rustic life, and arias from them, set to Hiller's graceful melodies, attained a hitherto undreamed-of popularity.² Volkslied became a watchword with the storm and stress poets, but more as a theory, because it was couched in the language and thoughts of the common people, than as a fact to be imitated or studied. It was likewise outwardly prized by the early romantics, although direct traces of it may be hunted for in vain among the fancies of Novalis; and Tieck, great as were his services in calling attention to the older German poetry, will be remembered for his *Volksbücher*, and not for his isolated imitations of the Volkslied.³ The brothers Schlegel, too, who were more theorists than poets, could only, as Minor has suggested define popularity—they could not attain it.

Traces of the Volkslied from this time would doubtless have been more tangible, if a collection worthy of the name had existed. If the song books of the 16th and 17th centuries are excepted, and these were in the hands of none but the antiquary, or lay forgotten in libraries, no such collection had been published.⁴ Herder's *Volkslieder* contained about two score German songs, most of them

¹ This fact is rarely given its real historical importance. 'Without melody, the Volkslied is what a picture is without color,' says Zimmer. Cf. his *Zur Charakteristik d. d. Volksliedes der Gegenwart*, Heidelberg, 1882, p. 4 ff. Also his *Studien über d. d. Volkslied*, Quedlinburg, 1881, and Widmann's *Geschichtsbild d. d. Volksliedes*. Leip., 1885, p. 21 ff. Cf. especially Lindner, *Gesch. d. d. Liedes im 18. Jhdt.* hrsg. L. Erk, cited from Wackernagel, *GddL.* II, 331, 332. Basel, 1894.

² Cf. Bolte, *l. c.* p. 9.

³ Cf. Klee, *Zu L. Tiecks germanistischen Studien*. Bautzen (Programm). 1895, p. 6.

⁴ Enumerated by Böhme. *Ad. Liederbuch*, 790-799. Paul's *Grundriss*, II, 759-762. Erk-Böhme, *Liederhort*, et al.

anything but Volkslieder, Elwert's *Ungedruckte Reste* (1784) perhaps a dozen, there were few in the *Almanach* (and for the best of reasons), and Ursinus' (1777) and Bothe's (1795) editions were largely a mere translation of Percy.

This lack *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* supplied.¹ In it for the first time there was placed within reach of all a mass of Volkslieder, carelessly heaped together and interspersed with counterfeit ballads by the editors and others,² but of great value to the modern lyric in Germany and necessary to any near appreciation of it. Arnim and Brentano had gathered from out-of-the-way places the despised folk-books and Volkslieder, the first of which furnished Görres with the lion's share of his *Volksbücher*, the second being the starting point of the *Wunderhorn*.³ Both these poets imitated in their own songs the Volkslieder in their collection, but correct as was their technique, they lacked that sympathy which might have brought them a wider circle of admiration and influence.

Classicism now met with organized opposition of the most determined kind. The Schlegels, Tieck and Novalis, Fouqué and Zach. Werner, Arnim and Brentano, Hoffmann and Kleist introduced the new *lingua Romana*, no longer popular Latin, but become popular German. Poets began to find their most natural expression in simple metre and naïve terminology. The *Volkssprache*

¹ Published 1806–(Sept. 1805)–1808, in Heidelberg.

² It may be reminded in this connection that Büsching and v. d. Hagen's collection of Volkslieder (Berlin, 1807), in which the authenticity of the songs was especially emphasized, left almost no trace. Cf. Birlinger and Creclius, *D. K. Wunderhorn*. Wiesbaden and Leipzig, 1874–1876. Introd. to 1st vol. That Müller was cognizant of the occasional dishonesty of the *Wunderhorn's* editors is clearly shown by the following passage from his essay, 'Bürger's Lenore und ein neugriechisches Volkslied' (A. Müller: *Moderne Reliquien*, Berlin, 1845, I, 120 ff.)—'Das *Wunderhorn* theilt uns ein längeres Lied mit, angeblich dasselbe, welches Bürger in jener Mondnacht singen gehört habe; indessen ist den Angaben des *Wunderhorns*, wie allen *Wundern* der neuern Zeit, nicht zu trauen . . . u. s. w.'

³ For the circumstances attendant upon the publication of the *Wunderhorn*, cf. Bartsch. *Romantiker und germanistische Studien in Heidelberg 1804–1808*. Heidelberg, 1881, p. 9, et seq. Also Steig, *A. v. Arnim und Clemens Brentano*. Stuttgart 1894, p. 130 et seq.

which Luther had installed as the soul of prose was made by these new reformers the kernel of epic and lyric song. A group of hardy spirits, among them the Grimms, Uhland and Kerner, undismayed by Nicolai's successor, Voss,¹ and his brandished *Morgenblatt*, gathered around Arnim in the publication of the *Einsiedler*, to make folklore, preëminently the Volkslied, the propaganda of late Romanticism.²

The appearance of the *Wunderhorn* and of Goethe's favorable review of it³ seemed to awake young poets everywhere to imitation of the strains of the Volkslied. Scores of songs written 'in a tone compounded of Goetheism and a naïve striving for popularity' now sprang into being. Eichendorff's toast

*Auf das Wohlsein der Poeten,
Die nicht schillern und nicht goethen,*

could apply to very few, certainly not to himself. Already influenced by the poems of Claudius,⁴ he went to Heidelberg, then the Mecca of romanticism, and wrote the *Zerbrochenes Ringlein*: Chamisso, returned from his tour of the world, renewed in his lyrics at least a few of the *Wunderhorn* songs: Uhland, Kerner, Schwab and Heine began to write songs which were to grow as popular as any Volkslied. The singers of freedom, Körner, Arndt and Schenkendorf, owed their popularity to no chance preservation, but directly to the rejuvenated Volkslied, purged of its dross by their fiery patriotism.

In the opening decades of the present century, then, a great store of Volkslieder was the stock in trade of the average German lyricist. This mass of song from previous centuries was clay in the hands of the potter. Gleim trifled with it, as might have been expected, Bürger peopled it with the terrors of Scotch balladry, Goethe

¹ The same Voss who in 1773 had been mad after street-ballads.

² Cf. Pfaff. *Tröst Einsamkeit*. Freiburg, i/B. 1883.

³ Cf. *Jenaische Allg. Litteratur-Zeitung*, 1806, Nos. 18, 19; also *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, I, 231.

⁴ *ADBiographie*, vol. V, p. 723.

first gave it the breath of a new life,¹ Chamisso studied its psychology,² Uhland purified it of its brutality,³ Kerner wove it into the meshes of his wild fancy, Heine made it sensuous and aped its awkwardness,⁴ Eichendorff infused it with the spirit of the middle ages. Wilhelm Müller never departed from the Volkslied in one shape or another in his songs, and its influence may be clearly seen not only in the mill-cycle, nor alone in his songs of the road, his hunting and drinking lays, or his lyric ballads, but—where one would scarce expect it—in his religious verses, his occasional pieces, and even in his verses on foreign models⁵ and his Greek songs.

Müller was born in Dessau in the year 1794. His childhood was peculiarly untrammelled, owing to the fears which his parents entertained for his health, as he was the sole survivor of six children. He grew up free from sickness, with a single exception, and his healthy youth spent in the woodlands and by the streams of his birth-

¹ Though, in this connection, it would seem unfair not to mention the claim of Günther, despite the statement of Fulda (in the introduction to his edition of Günther's poems. DNL. 38, I, p. XXVII) that G. never abandoned the style of learned-poetry, and intentionally avoided popular treatment. For in his own edition Fulda (note to pp. 41, 42) shows that Günther's *Abschied von seiner ungetreuen Liebsten* became a Swabian Volkslied, and later through Hauff's unconscious plagiarism a German one. And Biese, *l. c.* 278, 279, shows conclusively Volkslied usages in Günther, which might be easily multiplied. Cf. also Waldberg (*Ren. Lyrik*), p. 55, and Hofmann: *Zur Geschichte eines Volksliedes*. Pforzheim (Progr.), 1897, etc.

² Cf. Tardel. *Quellen zu Chamisso's Gedichten*. Graudenzer Programm, 1896.

³ Cf. Eichholtz. *Quellenstudien zu Uhlands Balladen*. Berlin, 1879, pp. 101 ff.

⁴ A comparison of Uhland's attitude towards the Volkslied with that of Heine's shows the clearer insight of the former. 'The songs of the troopers and the clerks, for example (says Müllenhoff, *Sagen Märchen Lieder*, XXIX), are not always the most decent, and there exist rimes for the rabble, too, written in the manner of the Volkslied—often to parody it. It would be nonsense, however, to judge the latter's worth from a depraved example. The true Volkslied is chaste, unaffected, and never common or low. No sadder misconception is possible than to assign to it all the prosaic songs which are written in the language of the people.'

⁵ Least clearly of all perhaps in his sonnets (*Die Monate*) and his epigrams.

place may account for the simple spontaneity of his *Waldhornistenlieder*. Schwab thought it might have been the journeys to Frankfort, Dresden and Weimar which Müller made in his boyhood, that served to awaken in him that *cura vagandi* which is the theme of so many of his songs; but it may have been with greater likelihood the time of unrest in which he lived, and the result of his year of service in the army.

That Müller was in close sympathy with the dreams of the Germany of his day was shown by the readiness with which he entered upon the war of liberation.¹ In this he served as a private soldier and as a poet, and songs from this time of his life are born of the same war-muse which animated the lyrics of Körner and Arndt.²

The year of military service wrought a change in Müller, for in 1814, on his return from Berlin, he devoted himself to the study of the older German Literature, which was a far cry from the classic studies which began his university life. In 1816 his *Garland from the Minnesingers* appeared, and shortly afterwards his first song-cycle, the result of his membership in a poetical circle with the painter Wilh. Hensel, Fouqué and others who met at the house of Stägemann.³ In 1816 Arnim wrote the preface

¹ 'Today Boeckh stops lecturing,' stands written in one of Müller's notebooks, 'to-morrow we march on Paris.'

² The complaint often made that M.'s songs of freedom were only for a foreign (the Greek) cause arose from the ignorance of the *Bundesblüthen* songs which prevailed until Prof. Hatfield recently published them. For surely Körner, or Arndt, or Schenkendorf, were never more fiercely patriotic (or bombastic) than was Müller in the *Morgenlied am Tage der ersten Schlacht*:

*Aus Franzenschädeln trinken wir
Dort unsern deutschen Trank,*

a transcript of Gleim's verse in *Schlachtgesang bei Eröffnung des Feldzuges 1757*:

Aus deinen Schädel trinken wir
Bald deinen süßen Wein.

Cf. *The Earliest Poems of W. M.*, pp. 4. 34.

³ Schwab's enthusiastic description of Müller's personal appearance at this time (*l. c.* XVIII) is no more trustworthy than Goethe's laconic: 'An uncomfortable personage, very well content with himself and—worst of all—wearing spectacles.' Cf. *Gespräche*, ed. Biedermann, vol. V, p. 141.

to Müller's translation of Marlowe's *Faustus*, the visible token of a friendship not without influence upon Müller's lyrics and his knowledge of the *Wunderhorn*. His love for folk-songs is further shown by the studies he made of the people and their lyrics during his sojourn in Italy, evidenced especially in the *Lieder aus dem Meerbusen von Salerno*, the ritornelles from Albano, and the *Ländliche Lieder*.¹ Goethe had brought back from Italy a love for classic form, Müller, these verses as inelegant and as natural as a Dutch scene by Teniers or Wouvermann, instinct with the atmosphere of their surroundings.

After his return from Rome his life went quietly on to the end in Dessau, where he was teacher and librarian. Müller made his popular metres the expression of all he felt and thought to a degree seldom equalled, and he never outgrew them. Uhland and Eichendorff and Heine, greatly as they were influenced by popular song, went outside of and beyond this for many of their models, but Müller wrote scarcely a line from first to last which did not betray the influence of the Volkslied. He believed with Arnim that the commonness of the Volkslied detracted from it as little as it did from the value of forest trees, that they were all green. Even the *Griechenlieder* are content to be as simply lyric and dramatic as the miller-cycle itself, though they are rendered unnatural to modern

¹ Müller learned from Rückert the possibilities of the ritornelle. Cf. his discussions of Rückert's work in *Urania*, 1822, *Verm. Schr.*, V, p. 368 ff: also *Rom, Römer und Römerinnen* (1820). Th. I, p. 52 ff. 'The whole folk-poetry of this region,' said Müller, 'compresses itself almost altogether into the little three verses of the ritornelle.' A part of one of M.'s ritornelles, however, was not learned in Italy, for Prof. Hatfield has shown it to be a paraphrasing of Henry Carey's *Sally in Our Alley*. Cf. *Ged.* II, p. 28, ll. 23-25.

*Von allen Tagen in der ganzen Woche
Ist keiner, der mich halb so glücklich mache
Als der, so zwischen Samstag fällt und Montag.*

And Carey's ballad :

*Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day,
And that's the day that comes between
A Saturday and Monday.*

taste by the evident straining after the pathetic which obscures their real worth.

Comparison of Müller with his better known contemporaries is necessary, for it is in their company that he belongs,¹ although it may be objected that much of his song is not destined to live as long as theirs. Uhland lived beyond the allotted three score years and ten, Eichendorff died in his seventieth year, Heine died at 57—Müller died at 33, perhaps before he had more than barely indicated the powers with which he was gifted. A halo of pity surrounds his life therefore, as it does the lives of Novalis, Heinrich v. Kleist and Theodor Körner, and has caused certain critics to indulge in some hyperbole with regard to his merits. Yet, impossible as it is to measure what Müller might have accomplished, if he had lived longer, his youth must be kept in mind in any final judgment of his lyrics, if a true perspective is desired.

It was by very reason of his short life, however, that Müller's work remained such a unit. The rose-hued effulgence which lies upon natural objects in youth had not deepened to a darker shade before his death. Reminiscent sadness, therefore, the pessimism of experience, the caution of maturity—these are absent from his verses, and in their place is the imaginative gaiety and reckless humour of young manhood. Like Heine he gathered much honey from the Volkslied, but unlike Heine, he lacked the sting with which to turn the honey to gall.

It is customary, because convenient, for criticism to put Müller into the same paragraph with Eichendorff. It may be disputed whether either gain by such association, though for purposes of contrast it may be permitted. But when, by reason of such close companionship Eichendorff is made the master lyricist and Müller at best but the chief apprentice: when the statement is rife and is taken for granted that Eichendorff discovered the romantic possibilities of the mill, while Müller transgressed a copyright

¹ Cf. *Eichendorffs Einfluss auf Heines Lyrik* (1), von S. Heller. Lemberg (Progr.) 1897, pp. 5, 22, etc.

(as it were) to enlarge upon the theme,¹ when one is almost asked to believe that the fresh air which meets the nostrils in Müller's tramping songs, full of an ideal vagrancy, is drawn from vials prepared and sealed by Eichendorff, then it would seem time the two were dissociated. Long enough at least to work over Müller's poetry in detail, to determine how directly the Volkslied has acted upon him, how directly the influence of Goethe, Uhland or Eichendorff may be measured.

The debt which *die schöne Müllerin*² owed Goethe has already been stated, but it was not as deep as the sea. Dialogues in verse between a youth or a maiden and some object in nature, such as tree or brook, were common in Volkslieder and well-known after the publication of the *Wunderhorn*. The debt of Müller's Songs of the Road to Uhland has also been recognized,³ and yet it is fair to assume they would have been written, if Uhland had never lived, for they seem the outbreking of Müller's spirit, not of Müller's bookishness. Criticism which would refer all things to a clearly recognizable source,⁴ which

¹ E. g. Minor (*ZfdPh.* XXI, 226): 'Nach einer anderen Richtung aber ist Wilhelm Müller der Nachfolger Eichendorffs: in der Vorliebe für die wandernden Stände (vgl. die Rubrik "Wanderlieder" in den Gedichten) in welcher sich recht die fahrige Natur der älteren und jüngeren Romantiker ausdrückt. Die Romantik der Mühle, auf welcher die berühmten "Müllerlieder" seines Nachfolgers beruhen, hat Eichendorff in die deutsche Lyrik gebracht (*In einem kühlen Grunde*). Auch die Müller gehören ja zu den fahrenden Ständen: "*Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust*."'

² Which Rich. M. Meyer (*Goethe*, 453) classes with Arnim's *Kronenwächter*, Uhland's *Ernst v. Schwaben*, Arndt's *Gedichte*, Grillparzer's *Sappho*, Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*, etc., as 'so much that was gratifying and significant' of this period.

³ By none more openly than Müller himself, who says *Schr.* 4, 118, 119 (*Über die neueste lyrische Poesie der Deutschen*), 'Billig gedenken wir hier zuerst der vortrefflichen *Wanderlieder* [Uhland's], die einen langen Zug von Nachahmungen hinter sich herziehen. Denn es erscheint jetzt kaum ein Almanach, worin nicht ein Paar solcher Wanderlieder zum besten gegeben werden.'

⁴ These *coraces* are well characterized in Karpeles (*H. u. s. Zeitgenossen*) 69. How unsafe such a method of proceeding might prove in the present writing may be instanced by a recent occurrence. The theme and treatment

regards lyric poetry as the effect of a given cause, governed by rules like mathematics, would make Müller the creature of Goethe, Uhland, or Eichendorff. Yet, though Müller was as free from the oddity and mysticism of the romantic school as Eichendorff, though he exchanged its irony and satire for a pervasive cheerfulness as did Eichendorff, he believed in untrammelled individuality as earnestly as any romanticist. He was not bounded by the Volkslied, but made the Volkslied as wide as his own horizon, and got out of it a new cycle of song which he made the expression of his every want and need.

In referring to the miller-cycle, Prof. Max Müller says: 'The tone of the miller-songs remind one, it may be, overmuch of the tone of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, but this is unavoidable. Theocritus could not write his idylls in splendid Attic Greek; he needed the congeniality of the Bœotian dialect. So too Wilhelm Müller, whom one must not blame too severely for an occasional *thät* or *Wasen* or *schleuss zu*,¹ which offend today perhaps more than they used to.' That is to say, the subjects with which the poet dealt demanded unpolished and colloquial speech, if the treatment be harmonious.

The comparison with Theocritus would not seem in all ways a happy one, for Müller's characters are more idealized than those of the Syracusan. Theocritus was dealing in a dramatic way for the first time with the shepherds about him, with the comedy and pathos of their lives: while Müller was dealing with no real miller's prentice, but with a prentice as literary traditions made him exist. Müller assumed a miller lad, as he did a pos-

of C. B. Fernald's sailor's chantey (publ. in the *Century Mag.*, Jan. 1897) is wonderfully like Müller's *Liebchen Überall*. The only court of appeal was Mr. Fernald himself. A note from him (June 8th, 1897) made clear that the resemblance was merely a coincidence, though one of a remarkable sort.

¹ The examples cited (and others of their kind which occur in Müller) are of the warp and woof of the *Wunderhorn*. It is odd that their usage must be thus warmly defended in an age which reveres Geibel, Mörike and Baumbach. Yet the preface which contains this apology is thirty years old.

tillion, a huntsman, or a musician,¹ invented situations, and then set himself to depict not real emotions, as he had experienced them among these classes of people, but the emotions he presupposed them to have.² The miller prentice no more represents the real Müller, than does the untiring toper, which is a favorite character of his.

The emotions of the miller cycle are then *à priori* unreal. Though we are told that Müller's heart was full of a first love when he wrote these songs,³ though they are unstudied in appearance, though there is a touching earnestness in them which rarely fails of effect, though there is a coherency to them usually beyond the power of lyric songs to express, yet the emotions depicted are unreal. The poet himself will have it so. The cycle is headed by the stage direction: 'To be read in winter,' and the twenty-three songs which compose it are bounded by prologue and epilogue. That none may suspect miller's lad and poet to be the same, he prefaces the songs with words which make short work of the languishing lover.

'I invite you, fair ladies and wise gentlemen,' he says, 'to witness a brand-new play furbished out in very latest style: dressed unpretendingly, simply adorned, brushed up with a bit of noble German rudeness, bold as any prentice in street brawl, with just a touch of piety, for home use . . . ' so runs the prologue. And the epilogue, no less rudely, crowds upon the cradle song of the brook which is lulling the miller to an eternal sleep with the

¹ Müller (*Verm. Schr.* IV, p. 117) discusses these *Kostümlieder*: 'Now he (Uhländ) laments as a wandering prentice, now he traverses the forest as a huntsman, now skipping about in shepherd's clothes on the green meadows, now playing for us the cavalryman or the grenadier. Everywhere we recognize the determination to avoid the phraseology of aristocratic sentiment, which had been sung to death, and to oppose to it the strong, clear note of popular ingenuousness. Here too has Goethe been the precentor, stirred to it by the older Volkslied; and the necessity for such a popular costume must have its foundation in the contemporary condition of our lyric poetry.'

² Cf. Goedeke, *Elf Bücher deutscher Dichtung*, vol. II, p. 463.

³ For Luise Hensel, who refused Clemens Brentano. Cf. Friedländer, *l. c.* 303. Max Müller, *ADBiogr.* s. v. *Wilh. Müller*.

words: 'Each point his moral, as best he may. For my part I give it up and content myself with wishing you pleasant dreams. Out with the sun and the little stars,¹ and may you find your way safe home in the darkness.'

There is no sincerity here. Even if we did not know that the miller cycle was in its inception a series of dramatic poems with a considerable *dramatis personæ*, to be composed and acted out by a poetizing club in Berlin, and that it was suggested by *la bella molinaria*, there could be no mistaking the intention of Müller. Prof. White,² in contrasting the Volkslied with the songs of (other poets and) Müller says: 'A difference, indeed, exists. It is the contrast between the luxuriant disorder of nature intentionally and joyously careless, and the studied elegance of a cultivated landscape.' The mill is no nearer rusticity than was the *petit Trianon* of Marie Antoinette, the miller's lad is a gentleman in disguise, as in the older *Schäferlyrik*. The moving spirit of the poems is simplesse, not simplicity.

Need a modern Volkslied be sincere? Need it be the immediate expression of the feeling of the people who sing it: need it deal with experiences common to every heart? Need it be incorrect and faulty in diction, sketchy or vague in style: need it be simple, or rough, or inartistic, or unpremeditated?³

Hardly.

For, following the definition above given, Eichendorff's *In einem kühlen Grunde* is a Volkslied.⁴ Vilmar says with

¹ Cf. Eichendorff's *Zur Hochzeit*, 'Und löschen die Sterne aus.'

² *Deut. Volkslieder*, preface, p. VII.

³ An anonymous contributor to the *Schlesische Ztg.* (mk., vom schlesischen Volkslied, Nr. 157, 158) speaks rationally of the modern Volkslied. 'It is changing in form and content, becoming more regular in structure and in metrics, throwing off the archaic adjectives, and with them the time-honored motives; as culture advances, ideas once used by the Volkslied are destroyed and new fuel is gotten from sensational news. The Volkslied begins to be sentimental.' *Jahresber. f. n. d. Littgesch.* I (1890) 2, 73. Cf. for a like statement E. H. Meyer, *Deut. Volkskunde*, Strassburg, 1898. Cap. vi (*Die Volksdichtung*), p. 326.

⁴ Though J. Meier (*Allg. Ztg.*, 1898, *Beil.* Nr. 54, p. 2) would qualify this statement as follows: *In einem kühlen Grunde* is an art-song, when sung in

truth:' 'As a lyric, singable production it is superior to Mörike's poem (*Das verlassene Mädchen*), and yet it lacks the transparency of the genuine, old Volkslied and the compelling necessity of the train of thought, or rather of the train of events. The traveling as a minstrel and the flight into battle do not seem to be sufficiently motivated, and the ending is—no matter what be said of it—too strongly drawn, reminding somewhat of Miller's song of Sigwart, of the gardener who sang a sad song. On the lips of a maiden—anyone not spoiled or made effeminate by the strong seasoning of our modern poetry will acknowledge it—Eichendorff's ending will appear to the best advantage. And yet, if we compare the '*fahr hin, fahr hin mein Apfel rot, du musst mir aus dem Sinn,*' with '*ich möcht am liebsten sterben, da wärs auf einmal still,*' it is a question to which turn—on the lips of a maiden—we would give the preference. In the contrasts with which we deal here is apparent the healthiness of the old time, as contrasted with the sickliness (or morbidity) of the

school, or in choral society. If it is sung by a village girl on her way to woodland meadow, it is an art-song, if she attempts to repeat the Eichendorff song, even though she be guilty of occasional slips of memory: otherwise (i. e. if she has no thought of the Eichendorff text) it is a Volkslied. That such minute analysis of a song, such hair-splitting distinction of terms, although useful for purpose of detailed classification, breaks down in fact as often as it succeeds in fact, may be luminously shown in the case of Schiller's *Mädchen aus der Fremde*, taken up as a Volkslied in C. Köhler and J. Meier's *Volkslieder von d. Mosel u. Saar*, p. 231, which is printed (although 'sung a great deal by the people') exactly as it occurs in Schiller's published poems—with the substitution of 'und bald ging' for 'doch schnell war' in the third verse of the second stanza. Here we have then, not 'the development, the recasting, in short the evolution, which (in the words of J. Meier, *l. c.*) takes place involuntarily and without previous reflection, with each new singing of an art-song which is passing into popular favor,'—we have, on the contrary, an exact reprint (with the single, unimportant exception above noted) of the art-song, just as it occurs on the printed page, just as it has been learned in school or in choral society, just as it has been sung by the village girl on her way to woodland meadow, just as Schiller himself, after due correction and filing, sent it off to the printer. Certain art-songs undergo undoubtedly complete transformation and even mutilation, before they become Volkslieder: certain songs, as shown above, do not: why then try to establish here a criterion?

¹ *Handbüchlein*, p. 194, 195.

modern world.' How little such analysis, true and sympathetic as it may be, affects the popularity of Eichendorff's lyric may be gathered by recalling that it is sung everywhere, being often mistaken for an old Volkslied from past centuries.

It is, too, scarcely necessary to quote a stanza of Schiller's *Mädchen aus der Fremde*:²

*Beseligend war ihre Nähe,
Und alle Herzen wurden weit :
Doch eine Würde, eine Höhe
Entfernte die Vertraulichkeit,*

to remind the hearer how little the song partakes of the qualities or the diction which one is taught to associate with the older Volkslieder. And yet, despite the unyielding fact, of which Eichendorff's and Schiller's songs attest, that the only definition of a Volkslied is a song sung by the people for a considerable time, and that absolutely no other criterion exists, Gräter, writing in 1794,³ maintains that the real Volkslieder are never so correct and ornate, so grammatical and methodical, as those intended from their inception for a critical audience, or at least a judicial one—and for more than a century since Gräter, others have been saying the same thing in different form.

Judged by every criterion which criticism has been wont to apply, *Der untreue Knabe* of Goethe's is far nearer its model than Bürger's *Lenore*.⁴ Yet, in the face of cri-

¹ A. Thimme (*Lied u. Märe*, Gütersloh, 1896, p. 16) evidently considers modern songs morbid and sentimental, likewise. 'Tell me,' he says, 'where have you learned these songs?' 'We have learned them in school,' answer the maidens, whom he is asking to sing to him. 'Such songs I do not want,' he replies, but only such as you have *not* learned in school, such as you sing in the spinning-room, or at Easter and Whitsuntide, when you are off to the woods.' Songs learned in school: art-songs. Songs learned in the spinning room: Volkslieder. Why?

² *Volkslieder v. d. Mosel u. Saar*, p. 231.

³ Cf. *Bragur*, Leipzig, 1794, III, 208 ff. *Über die Deutschen Volkslieder und ihre Musik*.

⁴ Cf. Victor Hehn. *Gedanken über Goethe*.

teria, one is known to all Germany, the other only to the few.

*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten
Dass ich so traurig bin
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten
Dass kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn*

does not sound like any Volkslied written before the 18th century, yet Heine has made it one in the 19th.

The phrases 'ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,' 'mir ist als ob,' 'weiss nicht wie mirs geschah,' 'ich wollt als Reiter fliegen,' 'ich möcht,' are the dreamy and visionary phrases of romanticism, but they occur in songs of Eichendorff and Müller and Heine again and again, and these songs are Volkslieder.

Therefore, to return to Müller, it need not be surprising to hear song after song of his widely and generally sung, when a close study of these reveals the fact that they are as widely different from the ancient Volkslied form as democracy is from the feudal system. Other times, other customs, must be extended to mean other times, other songs. *Volkssprache* changes with the changing generations, and so do *Volkssitte*, *Volksglauben* and *Volkssagen*—why not frankly add *Volkslied* to the list and have done?

*'Andere Zeiten, andere Vögel,
Andere Vögel, andere Lieder.'*

Once a Volkslied, not always a Volkslied. Old songs are passing, new ones coming into vogue. There are the old historical Volkslieder preserved in MSS. and collections, which go glimmering back to the earliest traditions and origins of the German race: there are new songs which were written only yesterday and which occupy the mind of modern Germany. They commingle oddly everywhere. Song collections written down from the mouths of the people in the provinces show this. A Volkslied of the 16th century stands beside one from the 19th: not far from either is one whose life is lapsing—'*nur Leuten die etwa in den vierziger Jahren standen noch bekannt*,' 'Nur

noch den Erwachsenen bekannt,' etc. These collections are like forests which contain oaks hundreds of years old, oaks which are decaying, and young saplings bending before every breeze.

That Müller's songs bear resemblance in the themes of which they treat, in the turns of speech in which they are clothed, and in many of their simple metres, to the older Volkslieder in the *Wunderhorn* is then an interesting fact, but not a vital one in their development. If the *Wunderhorn* had not been printed, Müller would have been a poet, and his songs would have been widely sung. If he had relied less upon the style of the older Volkslieder, it is possible he would have been more independently popular, more sung to-day. This is a matter which can be determined in negative or affirmative, only after the facts of his obligation to the Volkslied have been discussed in detail.

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